CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the above-referenced application:

1. (Currently amended) A system comprising:

shared system registers, each register including one or more bits defining an access protocol, and one or more bits representing data ; and

N processors, N≥2, where N is an integer, each accessing the shared system registers, wherein said one or more bits defining the access protocol include one or more bits that define a register access type for each N processors.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) A system, as defined in claim ~~2~~ 1, the register access type being selected from a group that includes READ, READ/CLEAR, READ/SET, and READ/WRITE.

4. (Previously presented) A system, as defined in claim 3, further comprising at least one programmable configuration register operative to encode and store said one or more bits defining the access protocol, each of said at least one programmable configuration register corresponding to one of the shared system registers.

5. (Currently amended) A system, as defined in claim 4, wherein:

each programmable configuration register ~~consisting~~ consists of N*2 bits; and

the configurable register access types are encoded into 2 bits.

6. (Currently amended) A system, as defined in claim 3, the access protocol encoded and provided as input signals to ~~the~~ a hardware design.

7. (Currently amended) A system, as defined in claim 3, the access protocol encoded and selected as a build-time option in ~~the~~ a hardware design source code.

8. (Original) A system, as defined in claim 3, the access protocol further including an arbitration priority.

9. (Currently amended) A system, as defined in claim 8, comprising programmable configuration registers operative to encode and store the access protocol, each programmable configuration register corresponding to one of the shared system registers.

10. (Currently amended) A system, as defined in claim 9, wherein:

N is 2; and

each programmable configuration register ~~including~~ includes 5-bits, 2 bits represent the access type of one of the two processors, 2 bits represent the access type of the other of the two processors, and 1 bit represents the arbitration priority.

11. (Currently amended) A system, as defined in claim 9, wherein:

each programmable configuration register ~~registers~~ consists of $N*(2+\text{ceiling}(\log_2 N))$ bits; and

the access protocol including the four access types are encoded into 2 bits per processor and the arbitration priority encoded into $\text{ceiling}(\log_2 N)$ bits.

12. (Currently amended) A system, as defined in claim 8, the access protocol encoded and selected as a build-time option in ~~the~~ a hardware design source code.

13. (Currently amended) A system, as defined in claim 8, the access protocol encoded and provided as input signals to ~~the~~ a hardware design.